

amino acid polypeptide. The *Arabidopsis* and *Oryza* predicted protein sequences display 37% similarity and 20% identity over their entire length.

[On page 24, paragraph beginning at line 26:]

Neither EMF1 nor OsEMF1 displays significant homology to proteins of known function from any organism. Nevertheless, several domains could be identified in the predicted EMF1 and OsEMF1 polypeptides, including nuclear localization signals (Raikhel, 1992), phosphorylation sites, an ATP/GTP binding motif (P-loop) (Walker et al., 1982), and a LXXLL motif. The LXXLL motif has been demonstrated to mediate the binding of steroid receptor co-activator complexes to a nuclear receptor ((Heery et al. Nature, 387:733 (1997); Torchia et al., 1997). In plants, it has been identified in the RGA and GAI proteins, both transcriptional regulators in the gibberellic acid (GA) signal transduction pathway (Peng et al., 1997; Silverstone et al., Plant Cell, 10: 155 (1998)). A PSI-BLAST homology search (Altschul et al., 1997) indicates a region of the EMF1 protein between amino acids 901 and 1034 that displays similarity (identities: 23%, positives: 37%) with two members of a nuclear receptor gene family. This gene family comprises one of the most abundant groups of transcriptional regulators in mammals with members involved in various developmental processes (Sluder et al., 1999). Furthermore, the EMF1 protein displays homopolymeric stretches of serine residues, as do the two transcriptional regulators RGA and GAI, (Silverstone et al., Plant Cell, 10: 155 (1998)). The identification of these motifs indicates that EMF1 and OsEMF1 could represent a new class of regulatory molecules that function as transcriptional regulators during shoot development in higher plants.

REMARKS

Applicants herein make minor changes to the specification prior to examination. Applicants inadvertently refer to Figure 2 though Figure 2 was not included in the patent application as filed. Figure 2 is not necessary for understanding the invention nor to understanding the text of the sentences wherein reference to Figure 2 was inadvertently made.

CONCLUSION

Marked-up versions of the changes to the specification are attached to this amendment. In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.